

CLAIMS:

1. A device for temporarily shielding the end of a surgical instrument sharp comprising:
- 5 a housing having a proximal end and a distal end;
- an opening formed in the distal end of the housing for receiving an end of a surgical instrument sharp therethrough;
- 10 a body located in the housing and movable between a first position in which an end of the body obstructs the opening and a second position in which the body is retracted from the opening;
- resilient means for biasing the body into the
- 15 first position; and
- actuation means to move the body against the action of the resilient means into the second position.
- 20 2. A device as claimed in claim 1 wherein the body is a piston with a tapered distal end.
3. A device as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein the resilient means is a spring means
- 25 which is mounted between the proximal end of the body and a stop means within the housing.
4. A device as claimed in claim 3 wherein the spring means is a coil spring.
- 30 5. A device as claimed in claim 1 or 2 in combination with forceps, wherein the device is mounted on the forceps and the resilient means is provided by the resilience of the forceps.

6. A device as claimed in claim 5 in combination with forceps wherein said actuation means is a coupling provided between said body of the device and an arm of the forceps.

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7. A device as claimed in claim 6 in combination with forceps, wherein the coupling is formed integrally with the body.

10 8. A device as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein the opening is defined by a reentrant end wall portion of the housing.

15 9. A device as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein the inner surface of the housing tapers inwardly towards the opening.

20 10. A device as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein the actuation means comprises a pullwire secured to the body.

25 11. A device as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein at least the end of the body which obstructs the opening can wobble from side to side when the body is in said second position.

30 12. A device as claimed in claim 1 further comprising first and second arms and said actuation means is coupled to at least one of said first and second arms.

35 13. A device as claimed in claim 12 wherein said actuation means is a coupling provided between said body of the device and the at least one of said first and second arms.

14. A device as claimed in claim 13 wherein said coupling is a support bar.

15. A device as claimed in claim 12, 13 or 14
5 wherein said actuation means is integrally formed with said body.

16. A device as claimed in any one of claims 12 to 15 wherein said first and second arms are spring
10 biased towards or away from each other and the resilient means is provided by the spring bias of said first and second arms.

17. A device for temporarily shielding the end of a
15 surgical instrument sharp comprising:

a housing having a proximal end and a distal end;

an opening formed in the distal end of the housing for receiving an end of a surgical instrument sharp therethrough;
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a body located in the housing and movable between a first position in which an end of the body obstructs the opening and a second position in which the body is retracted from the opening;

25 first and second arms movable relative to each other;

a support bar to couple the body to one of said first and second arms;

wherein movement of the first and second arms
30 relative to each other causes the support bar to move the body between said first and second positions.

18. A device for shielding a surgical instrument sharp substantially as hereinbefore described and
35 with reference to the accompanying drawings.